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Kabul 11° Rainy | Kandahar 27° Cloudy | Herat 19° Cloudy | Jalalabad 19° Rainy | Mazar-e-Sharif 17° Partly cloudy | Bamyan -2° Rain and snow

Muttaqi in Oman to discuss bilateral political, economic relations



KABUL: Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the acting Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate, visited Oman to discuss bilateral political and economic relations, the ministry's deputy spokesman Hafiz Zia Ahmad Takal said in a statement on his X official account Sunday.

Takal stated that Muttaqi visited Oman at the official invitation of Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, the Foreign Minister of that country. During the visit, the acting Foreign Minister will hold talks with a number of high-level officials of the country, focusing on strengthening political, economic exchanges, expanding bilateral cooperation between the two nations, the spokesperson concluded. **The Kabul Times**

Joint Afghan-Pak meeting to reopen Torkham crossing, statement

KABUL: The Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said Sunday in a statement that a meeting was held between businessmen and representatives of the chambers of commerce of the two countries to discuss the reopening of the Torkham crossing.

Securing a ceasefire along the hypothetical Durand Line has been discussed in the meeting, the statement said.

The Torkham crossing point between Afghanistan and Pakistan is considered a key economic route for both countries, but unfortunately, the gate is still closed to all types of traffic by Pakistan.

It is not the first time that this vital route has been closed, but political differences have repeatedly resulted in the closure of the gate as such a trick had been used as pressure in the past. Such closures not only cause economic losses to traders, but also cause severe hardship to the common people, especially patients, students, workers, and commuters. The closure of Torkham, which has now been in place for nearly two weeks, has caused hardship to many people on both sides.

The Kabul Times



Iran vows cooperation with Afghanistan in strengthening health sector



KABUL: The acting ambassador of Iran in Kabul, Alireza Bigdeli, met with Noor Jalal Jalali, the acting Minister of Public Health of the Islamic Emirate, assuring his country's cooperation with Afghanistan's health sector, the ministry said in a statement the other day.

Bigdeli also pledged to resume work on the construction of hospitals in Kabul and Bamyan provinces, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, Jalali emphasized the need for capacity building among healthcare workers, access to high-quality medicine and modern medical equipment, and enhanced bilateral cooperation with Iran to strengthen Afghanistan's healthcare sector.

With the construction of hospitals in Kabul and Bamyan, thousands of people will be provided with healthcare services. **The Kabul Times**

Tens of school buildings to be reconstructed in Sar-e-Pul, ministry

KABUL: The Ministry of Education of the Islamic Emirate, said in a statement Sunday that 64 school buildings worth $512,000 will be reconstructed in the country's northern province of Sar-e-Pul.

According to the statement, the project's primary objective is to refurbish damaged schools and enhance the educational atmosphere for thousands of youths in the province.

See P4

Afghan helicopters should be returned, former military officials

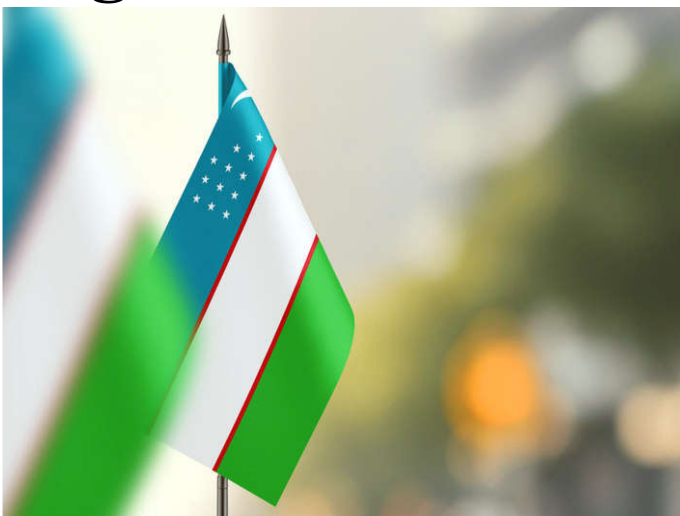


KABUL: A number of high-ranking military figures of the previous administration, in a gathering, urged Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to transfer Afghan weaponry and helicopters to the Islamic Emirate.

The officials claimed that the U.S. obliterated Afghanistan's modern armaments during their occupation, replacing them with outdated weapons from the Vietnam War era.

A former general named Shuh Gul Pashtun denounced those who relocated Afghan military assets abroad as traitors, emphasizing the Afghan people's unwavering desire to retain their weaponry and military resources. They censured certain individuals who, under the guise of representing ex-servicemen, were accused of deceiving foreign nations, asserting that these individuals pursued personal gain rather than truly representing former soldiers. **The Kabul Times**

Uzbek investors keen to invest in country's agricultural sector



KABUL: A number of Uzbek investors met with Mawlavi Attaullah Omari, the acting Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, expressing their interest in investing in Afghanistan's agricultural sector, the ministry said in a statement Sunday.

Welcoming the Uzbek investors, Mawlavi Omari assured that his-led ministry would cooperate with them in the field of investment in Afghanistan, according to the statement.

Since the Islamic Emirate took power a suitable investment ground has been provided in various fields in the country, he said, asking the domestic and foreign investors to invest in Afghanistan's different sectors.

As yet, hundreds of foreign investors invested in various sectors of the country.

The Kabul Times

Ramadan special book exhibition held in Herat

KABUL: A special book exhibition has been held on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan in Herat province, the Ministry of Information and Culture said in a statement Sunday. The exhibition has been held by a number of Heratian booksellers in cooperation with the provincial Information and Culture Department to support the culture of book reading in the province, the statement said.

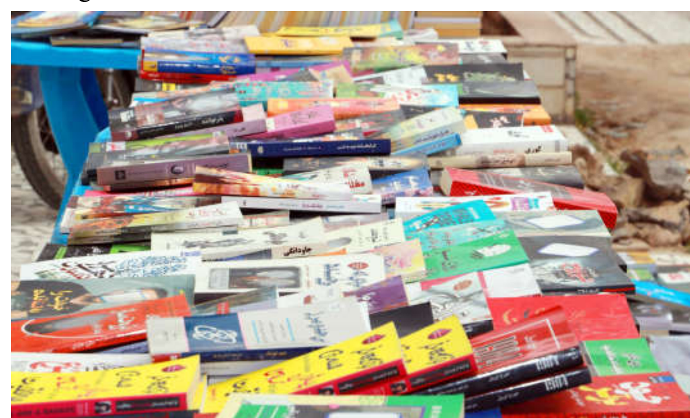
The statement quoted the manager of culture and arts at the Herat Information and Culture Department as saying that the street book exhibition can help grow the culture of book reading on a sustainable basis.

The organizers of the exhibition said that in order to promote the culture of reading and increase people's access to books, they are trying to hold a street exhibition in the city's busiest areas every month.

More than 3,000 volumes of special Ramadan books on topics including religion, history, literature, and social sciences have been displayed for sale at a discount to encourage citizens to read during the holy month of Ramadan.

Meanwhile, citizens and educators consider holding such an exhibition a positive step towards promoting the culture of reading.

The Kabul Times



Police arrest 23 over various crimes in provinces



KABUL: The Ministry of Interior Affairs said Sunday in a statement that at least 23 individuals have been arrested over various crimes in provinces.

"During a series of counter-crime and drug operations by the ministry's relevant police personnel, 23 people in connection with theft, trafficking of narcotics and humans and keeping of illegal weapons and other crimes have been arrested in Balkh, Helmand, Bamyan, Herat, Kunduz and Herat provinces," the statement said.

According to the statement, an eight-member group of skilled thieves were among the arrestees.

The detainees will be taken to the judicial organs for further investigation into their files, the statement added.

After the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate, most efforts have been made to crack down on the activities of criminal groups and eliminate the cultivation and trafficking of narcotics in the country.

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Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Islamic Emirate seeking good relations with world

Afghanistan, after the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate in 2021, has repeatedly announced that it wanted close political and economic engagement and good relations with the international community, particularly the Islamic nations.

The Islamic system has long asked the world for the restoration of good interaction and the opening of a new chapter of relations with Afghanistan after the defeat and withdrawal of foreign forces from the country.

Security is now sure countrywide thanks to the country's defense and security forces who are unequivocally striving to foil any criminal or malicious plots around the country.

Thousands of small and big development projects are either implemented or underway, the tourism industry has highly developed, drugs are fought and uprooted, and the way is paved for further foreign tourists' visits to the country.

So, world countries have to secure good relations with the Islamic Emirate and ignore attention to those who did nothing for the country but instead, they looted Afghanistan's property and invested abroad. They can do nothing for the country as they are now splintered into various hostile groups and are seeking foreign funds and support to once again disturb security and public order.

The Islamic Emirate's Minister of Justice, Abdul Hakim Sharee, has recently attended an international conference, "Building Bridges Between Islamic Sects," in Makka City of Saudi Arabia, and emphasized the expansion of relations between Afghanistan and the world.

During the conference, the acting minister highlighted the crucial role of Saudi Arabia in strengthening relations between the Islamic Emirate and other world countries.

Undoubtedly, Afghanistan, under the Islamic Emirate, sincerely wants good and enhanced relations with the world countries, particularly the Islamic countries, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which can facilitate the issue and cooperate in strengthening good relations of the Islamic system with the world.

It's also of the importance to bring solidarity among scholars and leaders of different Islamic sects to address significant issues and as the minister believed understanding and cooperation among scholars of various Islamic schools are essential and crucial in achieving common goals, particularly on major issues relating to sect and religion.

Key responsibilities of the government in Ramadan

Part IV

In many Islamic countries, one of the major challenges during Ramadan is the unreasonable increase in food prices.

As we have mentioned in the previous sections, the holy month of Ramadan holds special significance among Muslims as a month of worship, self-purification, and social solidarity.

It should be recognized and commemorated by the state as a distinct and special period. During this month, not only do Muslims engage in self-discipline and seeking closeness to Allah Almighty, but governments, as responsible institutions, must first ensure their own adherence to obligations and then encourage social institutions to fulfill specific duties in providing services to their citizens.

One of the most important responsibilities of governments during Ramadan is ensuring the basic needs of the people, supporting the underprivileged, and providing healthcare services to the sick.

One of the primary duties of the government, both during Ramadan and throughout the year, is to provide for the fundamental needs of the people.

However, during Ramadan, this responsibility becomes even more crucial, as the expenses of citizens increase, the demand for essential goods rises, and the necessity for healthier nutrition for those who are fasting intensifies.

Therefore, the government, first and foremost, and then social institutions, traders, and charitable individuals should be encouraged to assist the people.

This process can be strengthened through awareness campaigns and effective communication. In this regard, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce plays a key role in mobilizing traders and commercial enterprises.

In many Islamic countries, one of the major challenges during Ramadan is the unreasonable increase in food prices.

This price surge is sometimes driven by the profit-seeking motives of certain merchants, while in other cases, it is a result of increased demand.

Governments should implement regulatory policies such as setting price ceilings for essential goods, supporting domestic production, and monitoring supply and demand to prevent inflation and economic pressure on the people.

By adopting policies that encourage, motivate, and raise awareness, the government can ease the economic burden on citizens.

Governments can play a significant role in reducing economic hardship for low-income families through support programs such as financial assistance, incentivizing local businesses, distributing food packages, and supplying raw materials to charitable organizations. In some countries, governments, in collaboration with charities and the private sector, undertake initiatives such as distributing raw materials, providing free healthcare services, and organizing public iftars. This not only fosters a good relationship between the state and its citizens but also strengthens social solidarity and alleviates financial burdens on impoverished families.

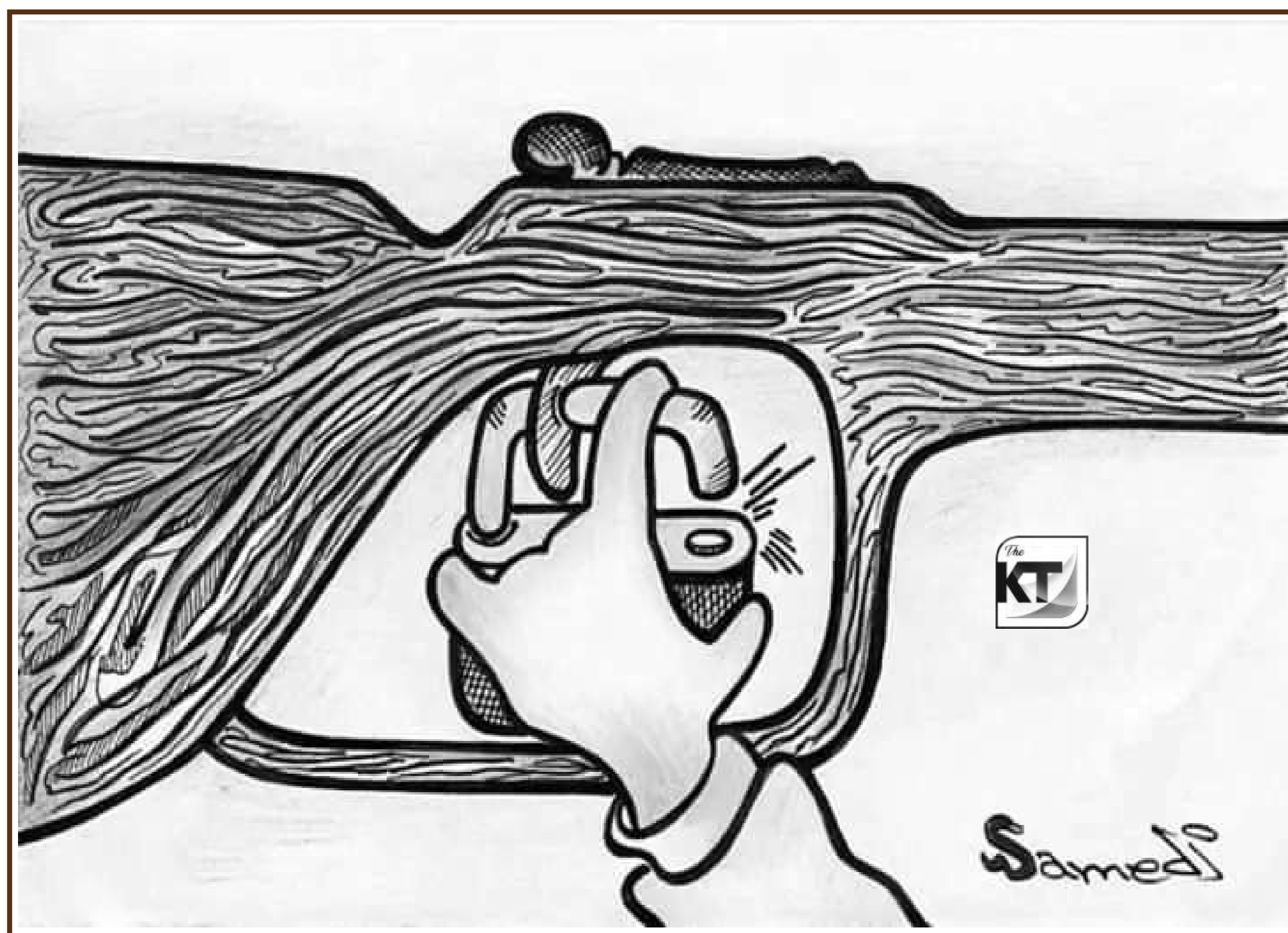


One way to reduce dependence on imports and control prices is by supporting domestic production. Governments can facilitate this by reducing taxes on food producers, providing financial assistance, and strengthening domestic supply chains. By reinforcing the agricultural and livestock sectors in honor of this blessed month, reducing tax burdens, and supporting entrepreneurs, including small and large-scale interest-free loan programs, the government can positively impact price regulation and economic self-sufficiency.

Moreover, this month is a time of charity and generosity, and special attention should be given to the weaker segments of society. Governments are also obliged to take measures to ensure that justice is better realized in Islamic societies. The state must, on one hand, reduce tax burdens on people and, on the other hand, encourage charities and merchants to donate in order to manage poverty to the best extent possible. One effective method in this regard is the implementation of "subsistence cards," which are provided to the needy in some countries to purchase essential goods.

Another approach to securing financial resources for assisting the underprivileged is to encourage traders, businesses, and citizens to pay zakat and charity. The government can promote public participation in this act by ensuring transparency in the collection and distribution of zakat. Additionally, establishing special funds to support the poor during Ramadan can play a significant role in reducing the economic struggles of this segment of society. The tradition of paying zakat and charity can be carried out through various channels, but institutions such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Council of Scholars, religious clerics, the Ministry of Information and Culture, and especially the media hold a crucial role in this matter.

FiroozAhmad Ebrahimi



Fundamental rights of Afghan women ensured in Afghanistan



The Islamic Emirate has once again clarified that Afghan women live in security with their rights protected in the country.

The Islamic Emirate spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in his most recent statement on his official X account, has once again stressed that the dignity, honor, and legal rights of women were a priority for the Islamic Emirate.

"In accordance with Islamic law and the culture and traditions of Afghan society, the fundamental rights of Afghan women have been secured. However, it should not be forgotten that the rights of Afghan women are being discussed within an Islamic and Afghan society, which has clear differences from Western societies and their culture," said Mujahid, stressing that Afghan women are living in security, both physically and psychologically.

"The Islamic Emirate considers itself responsible for safeguarding the rights that Islamic Sharia has defined for women," Mujahid stressed, noting that the Islamic Emirate's judicial system and relevant institutions had been tasked with ensuring women's rights, including their right to marriage, dowry, and inheritance.

To secure the fundamental rights of Afghan women in the country, the leadership of the Islamic Emirate has issued a very comprehensive and unprecedented decree on women's rights.

The decree generally prohibits those abusive practices, oppressions, bans and injustices against women, which have unfortunately deep roots in Afghan society since ancient times and are considered accepted norms and traditions by many people in the country.

Besides, the Islamic Emirate leader has issued separate decrees on women's rights as part of his decrees, woman is not a property to be dealt without her consent but a noble and free human being who can marry with her consent - no one can marry woman in exchange for what the decree said a peace deal or to end animosity.

The decree has also said that no one can marry a widow by force, including her relatives, and she has the right to whether to marry or determine her future.

Since, its re-establishment in mid-August 2021, the Islamic Emirate has focused on the protection of women's rights in the country based on the principles of Islamic law and Afghan society.

The Islamic Emirate has repeatedly made it clear that it has remained committed to ensuring all rights of the country's women based on the Islamic Sharia and asked the international community to respect it.

The status of women in Islam is a pertinent issue across the world and there is a misconception in the West that women are subjugated within it.

Conversely, a woman is considered an integral part of society in the sight of Islam. Islam considers women a special blessing, and their rights and responsibilities are equal to those of men.

The sacred text of the Quran and the early history of Islam bear testimony to the fact that women hold the utmost importance.

When the world was sidelining them, Islam not only safeguarded women but also set rights for them.

With this in mind, there is no room for anyone to conceive that women in Islam are inferior to men.

Each plays its specific role in collectively upholding societal balance.

Fida Mohammad

Ramadan & charity; a longstanding tradition of helping others

In early Islamic society, charity played a vital role in maintaining social harmony and supporting those in need.

One of the most significant forms of charity was waqf (endowment), a practice where wealthy individuals and government officials dedicated their wealth to humanitarian causes.



These endowments were often used to provide essential needs such as food, clothing, and shelter to the less fortunate. This system ensured that the poor, orphans, and travelers had access to basic necessities, particularly during times of hardship.

The concept of waqf was deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, which emphasized the importance of helping the needy.

Wealthy individuals, merchants, and rulers contributed portions of their wealth to establish charitable foundations, which were often associated with mosques, schools, hospitals, and soup kitchens.

These establishments were not only places of worship or education but also served as centers of social welfare.

The distribution of food, medical care, and financial support was a common practice, reinforcing the spirit of generosity and solidarity within the Muslim community.

One of the most notable expressions of charity during Ramadan was the tradition of providing free iftar meals to the public. Ramadan, the holy month of fasting, was a time of heightened spirituality and generosity, encouraging acts of kindness and social responsibility.

The endowments dedicated to charity played a crucial role in ensuring that even the most impoverished members of society could break their fast with dignity.

In cities such as Istanbul, Cairo, and Damascus, large communal iftar gatherings became a defining feature of Ramadan.

In Ottoman Istanbul, for example, wealthy individuals and sultans established public kitchens, known as imaret, which provided daily meals to the poor and travelers.

These kitchens were often attached to mosques or religious institutions and operated as charitable organizations sustained by waqf funds.

During Ramadan, these kitchens became particularly active, preparing large quantities of food to serve the fasting population. Long tables were set up in courtyards, mosques, and public squares, where people from all social backgrounds could come together and share a meal.

A similar tradition existed in Cairo, where grand feasts were organized in major public spaces.

Wealthy merchants and government officials contributed food and money to ensure that no one went hungry during the holy month. Large cauldrons of soup, rice, meat, and bread were prepared and distributed to the needy.

The tradition of feeding the poor was not limited to individuals; many religious institutions and scholars also participated in these efforts, reinforcing the idea that charity was a collective duty.

In Damascus, another center of Islamic civilization, charity during Ramadan took various forms.

Not only were free iftar meals provided, but wealthy individuals would also sponsor the distribution of clothing and financial aid to struggling families.

Caravanserais and public squares became gathering points for people seeking food and support. It was common for affluent families to invite the poor into their homes, ensuring that everyone, regardless of social status, had access to a proper meal.

The practice of Ramadan charity extended beyond major cities and was a common tradition throughout the Islamic world.

From North Africa to the Indian subcontinent, Muslim communities embraced the spirit of giving, strengthening social bonds and ensuring that no one was left behind.

The emphasis on collective welfare demonstrated the ethical and moral foundations of Islamic teachings, which encouraged generosity as a means of spiritual purification.

The legacy of waqf and charitable traditions during Ramadan continues to influence modern societies.

Many Muslim-majority countries today uphold the tradition of organizing free iftar meals for the needy.

Whether through community initiatives, mosque programs, or private donations, the values of compassion and generosity remain deeply embedded in the cultural and religious practices of the Muslim world.

By reflecting on the charitable customs of early Islamic societies, we gain a deeper appreciation for the role of philanthropy in fostering social justice.

The historical examples of waqf and Ramadan feasts remind us of the enduring importance of community support, ensuring that acts of kindness and generosity remain a cornerstone of Islamic ethics.

Sayed Sharif

Time for spring tree plantation in country

Spring is the season of renewal, growth, and new beginnings.

It's a time when the world awakens from its winter slumber, and nature comes alive with color, sound, and energy.

From the first bloom of a flower to the return of migratory birds, spring is a season of beauty and wonder.

But spring is more than just a feast for the senses; it's also a time of renewal for the mind and body.

As spring has almost arrived in most parts of Afghanistan, it is the time to get preparation for tree planting.

One of the best ways to add beauty and value to a home and our neighborhood is to plant trees.



Spring is a great time to plant trees. However, tree planting is no easy task that requires thorough planning and preparation as well as special knowledge and skills.

It all begins with planning. In fact, we may face many questions while getting ready for spring tree planting.

Where to plant trees? What trees should one select for home and our neighborhood? The earlier we start preparing for spring tree planting, the better we can decide what trees to plan.

It's crucial for us to plant trees that are suitable for our homes and neighborhoods. Actually, there are many things we must consider when choosing trees for our home and neighborhood.

Each tree has its own environmental preferences.

So, we need to study trees of our choice carefully before making a final decision. We can check even with farmers or those who know much about agriculture and planting trees.

The success of tree planting depends a lot on on-site preparation.

When preparing a site for planting trees, we may need to do different types of work.

These include: garden clean-up, burning leaves, lawn scalping, treating planting spots, weed control, and so on.

Many gardeners choose to prepare a tree planting site in the fall for a good reason.

It's pretty easy to plant trees in the spring if the site is prepared in the fall.

We don't need to wait until the tree planting site dries out. That means that we'll be able to start planting trees earlier. And of course, this will have a huge positive impact on tree growth. Spring tree planting goes hand in hand with tree fertilization.

In the spring, the soil lacks minerals as well as nutrients, which are crucial for healthy tree growth.

That's why it's so important to prepare soil for tree planting. Fertilizing soil needs to be a part of the preparation for spring tree planting.

If done right, soil fertilization results in better growth of newly planted trees and young trees.

As spring is arriving, it is a right time to decide and get preparation to choose tree and to plant trees in our home and neighborhood. A tree-planting initiative titled 'Green Legacy' has been also launched in Kabul by Kabul Municipality and the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA). Based on the program, 16 million saplings will be planted across the country this year.

It is a good opportunity for each Afghan citizen to take part in tree-planting campaigns across the country.

Mukhtar Safi

Development projects worth $6 million to be implemented in Paktika

SHARANA: Scores of development projects worth $6 million will be implemented in the country's eastern province of Paktika within the upcoming solar year, the provincial governor's press office said in a statement Sunday.



The projects will be implemented in coordination with the municipality, urban development and housing, the statement said.

During the inauguration ceremony, the provincial Deputy Governor Mawlavi Makhdoom Abdulsalam Saadat said: "This is a moment of joy and gratitude as we begin implementing a comprehensive development and reform plan for Sharana, which will lay the groundwork for standardized urban expansion." The plan includes the construction of numerous markets, primary and secondary roads, mosques, and other urban amenities, the statement said, adding that the first road under the project spans 759 meters in length and 18 meters in width, connecting the Katawaz and Ghazni highways. According to the statement, 45 markets and a mosque will be constructed by the private sector along the Katawaz and Ghazni highways.

A second road, measuring 951 meters in length and 15 meters in width, will also connect the Katawaz and Ghazni highways, featuring 45 additional markets and mosques.

The comprehensive plan includes 216 markets, 8 secondary roads, mosques, public restrooms, water reservoirs, a standardized canalization system, and other essential urban facilities.

The Kabul Times

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USD	GBP	INR	PKR	EUR	IRR	AED
01	01	1000	1000	01	1000	01
AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN	AFN
71.10	91.74	816	244	77.05	01.29	19.36



Volleyball competitions kick off in Ghazni



On March 9, 2025, volleyball competitions commenced in Ghazni province, organized by the National Volleyball Federation's representation in collaboration with the Ghazni Directorate of Physical Education and Sports. The event, launched in Aqasi village of the Khwaja Umari district, features 20 teams vying for supremacy in a month-long tournament. This initiative aims to honor the holy month of Ramadan while fostering unity and camaraderie among the youth of the region.

The opening match pitted the Aqasi B team against the Tormi team, setting the tone for the competition. In a decisive victory, Tormi dominated their opponents with a clean sweep, winning 3-0. The match showcased impressive skill and teamwork, hinting at the competitive spirit expected throughout the tournament. Spectators and organizers alike praised the enthusiasm and sportsmanship displayed by the players, marking a strong start to the event.

Held under the banner of celebrating Ramadan, the competition is more than just a sporting event—it's a platform to bring young athletes together, encouraging social cohesion and mutual respect. The month-long duration ensures ample opportunity for all teams to demonstrate their abilities, with matches scheduled to keep the momentum alive in the community. The Ghazni Directorate of Physical Education and Sports emphasized the importance of such activities in promoting physical fitness and strengthening bonds among the province's youth. As the tournament progresses, it is expected to draw increasing attention from local residents, further solidifying volleyball's popularity in the region. This event stands as a testament to the power of sports in uniting people, especially during a time of spiritual reflection like Ramadan. **The Kabul Times**

Afghanistan falls to Iran in a close 4-3 futsal match



Afghanistan's national futsal team played its final match in the Brazil Four-Nation Friendly Tournament against Iran, suffering a 4-3 defeat. Despite a strong performance, the Afghan players could not overcome their Iranian rivals. Akbar Kazemi scored two goals, while Hussain Mohammadi added one for Afghanistan.

This was Afghanistan's first-ever participation in the Brazil-hosted international futsal tournament, where they played against Brazil, Iran, and Greenland. The Afghan team secured a victory against Greenland but lost to both Brazil and Iran.

Following the defeat, Afghanistan's head coach, Majid Mortazavi, praised his team for their efforts despite the challenges of intense competition. He emphasized that playing against strong teams like Iran and Brazil provided valuable experience for Afghanistan's futsal squad. Mortazavi acknowledged that the tournament was a great learning opportunity, highlighting the resilience of his players under pressure.

The Kabul Times

Kick-Jitsu enthusiasts shine at Ramadan Cup 2025 in Paktia

A friendly Kick-Jitsu competition named the "Ramadan Cup" was held in Gardez, the capital of Paktia province, under the guidance of the Paktia Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, in partnership with the Martial Arts Federation.

The event, which took place on March 9, 2025, at the Ustad Najib Derman Sports Club, gathered 22 athletes for a night of spirited yet friendly competition.

The primary goal of the event was to promote unity and camaraderie among participants, reflecting the values of Ramadan.

The competition was structured across three age categories: young novices, youth, and adults, ensuring a diverse range of participants.

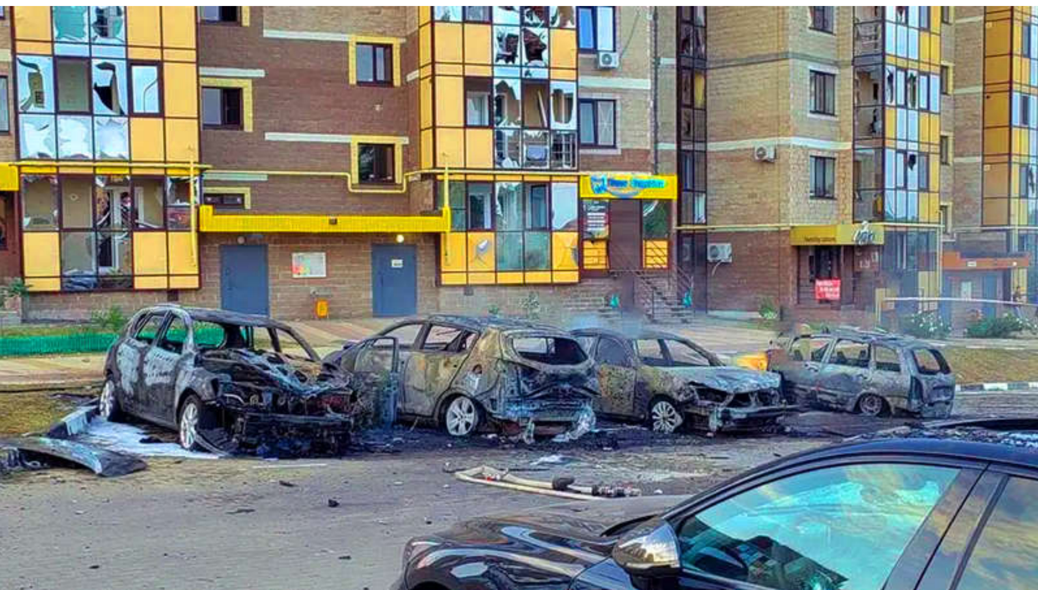
The matches, which spanned a single night, showcased the athletes' skills in the kick-jitsu discipline—a hybrid martial art combining elements of kickboxing and jujitsu. After intense bouts, 11 athletes emerged victorious, having outmatched their opponents through technique and determination.

The winners demonstrated exceptional prowess, earning well-deserved recognition for their efforts.

The primary objective of the Ramadan Cup was to strengthen bonds among athletes, promoting solidarity and mutual respect within the sporting community of Paktia.

The event concluded with a ceremony where the top-performing athletes were awarded certificates of appreciation, acknowledging their achievements and encouraging continued dedication to the sport. This competition not only highlighted the growing popularity of martial arts in the region but also underscored the role of sports in uniting individuals across different age groups. As a successful initiative, the Ramadan Cup 2025 set a positive precedent for future friendly tournaments in Paktia, reinforcing the values of discipline, unity, and excellence. **The Kabul Times**

Russia says it downed 88 Ukrainian drones overnight



Russia's air defense units destroyed 88 Ukrainian drones overnight with no injuries or damage reported, Russian authorities said on Sunday.

The Russian defense ministry said that 52 of the drones were destroyed over the border Belgorod region, while 13 were over the Lipetsk region and nine were over the Rostov region, both in Russia's southwest.

The rest of the Ukrainian drones were downed over Russia's Voronezh, Astrakhan, Krasnodar, Ryazan and Kursk regions.

Governors of the Lipetsk and Ryazan regions said overnight that their regions were under air raid alerts but they did not report any damage or injuries.

Russia's aviation watchdog Rosaviatsia said on Telegram that the airports of Astrakhan, Nizhny Novgorod and Kazan were closed for traffic for several hours overnight to ensure air safety.

Unofficial Russian news Telegram channels reported that the Ukrainian attack on Ryazan and Lipetsk targeted local oil refineries.

Ukrainian Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko, who heads the Center for Countering Disinformation, part of the National Security and Defense Council, said, without providing evidence or saying directly that Ukrainian drones were involved, that the Novolipetsk Metallurgical Plant in Lipetsk was under attack.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports on what was targeted in the attacks.

Ukraine has said that its attacks in the war, which Russia started three years ago, are aimed at destroying infrastructure key to Moscow's war efforts and are in response to Russia's continued bombing of Ukraine.

Alarabiya

Hamas urges 'immediate' start of talks for second phase of Gaza ceasefire

Hamas reiterated on Sunday its insistence on moving directly into negotiating a second phase of the Gaza truce, as Israel announced it would dispatch a delegation to Doha for further talks.

Representatives of the Palestinian militant group met with mediators in Cairo at the weekend, emphasizing the need for humanitarian aid to re-enter the besieged territory "without restrictions or conditions," according to a Hamas press release.

The high-level delegation also stressed the need for "moving directly to begin negotiations for the second phase" of the deal, which will aim to lay the groundwork for a permanent ceasefire.

Hamas's demands for the second phase include a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, an end to the blockade, the reconstruction of the territory and financial support, an official told AFP.

Hamas spokesperson Abdel Latif al-Qanoua said indicators were so far "positive."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office meanwhile said it would send delegates to Doha on Monday.





Israel has maintained it wants an extension of the truce's first phase until mid-April.

That initial period ended on March 1 after six weeks of relative calm that included the exchange of 25 living hostages and eight bodies for the release of about 1,800 Palestinian prisoners held in Israel. The truce largely halted more than 15 months of fighting in Gaza, where virtually the entire population was displaced by Israel's relentless military campaign in response to Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack.

It also enabled the flow of vital food, shelter and medical assistance into Gaza.

After Israel turned the pipeline off again, UN rights experts accused the government of "weaponizing starvation."

Displaced Palestinian widow Haneen al-Dura told AFP she and her children spent a month and a half living on the street "among dogs and rats" before receiving a tent. **Alarabiya**

Tens of school buildings to be ...

From P1

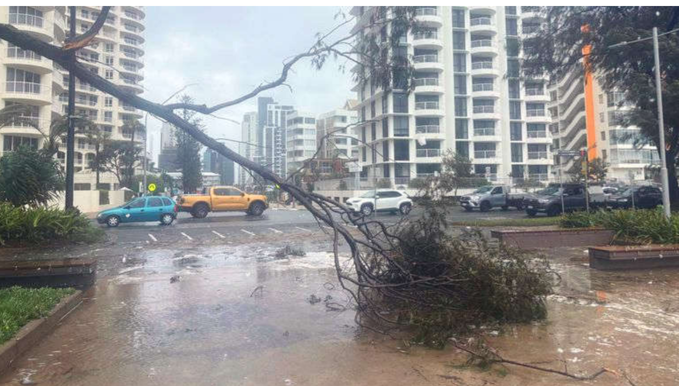
It should be said that aligned with the Islamic Emirate's dedication to developing and bolstering the education system, numerous new schools have been constructed or reconstructed in both the capital and provinces over the past three years.

Since its takeover, the Islamic Emirate has been making efforts to provide students with suitable learning environments by building and renovating hundreds of schools across the country.

The Kabul Times



Australia's east coast battered by Alfred's deadly winds, heavy rains



Gusts and torrential rain have caused widespread power outages and triggered flash floods in parts of Australia's east coast, with one person killed and a dozen soldiers wounded.

After days hovering off the coast as a Category 2 tropical cyclone and battering a 400km (250-mile) stretch of coastline, Alfred significantly weakened on Sunday, but still left significant disturbance along its path.

Some 316,540 people were without power as of Sunday in Queensland's southeast, where the Gold Coast city was the Energex said in a statement.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday that the "situation in Queensland and northern New South Wales remains very serious due to flash flooding and heavy winds".

"Heavy rainfall, damaging wind gusts, and coastal surf impacts are expected to continue over coming days," Albanese said in Canberra.

"We've seen that culminate in reports of flash flooding in homes and in businesses," Crisafulli was quoted as saying by the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper.

News.com.au reported that emergency services in Hervey Bay have carried out multiple rescues "in one of its worst weather emergencies on record" in the area.

Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said heavy rainfall that could cause flash flooding was developing on Sunday and could affect Brisbane as well as the Queensland regional centres of Ipswich, Sunshine Coast and Gympie.

Damaging winds with gusts of about 90km/h (60mph) were also possible in the state, the bureau said on its website.

Brisbane airport reopened on Sunday but posted on X that "ongoing weather may affect the schedule".

Queensland will decide later on Sunday whether about 1,000 state schools, closed due to the bad weather, will reopen on Monday.

The neighbouring state of New South Wales (NSW) has confirmed all public schools that were closed on Friday due to Alfred will remain closed again on Monday.

On Saturday, one man died in a flood in northern NSW.

Meanwhile, 13 Australian Defence Force soldiers en route to help residents in NSW's city of Lismore were injured in a road collision, officials said. According to The Sydney Morning Herald, two of the soldiers remain in serious condition.

Alfred is the first cyclone to cross the east Australian coast near the Queensland state capital of Brisbane since 1974.

Aljazeera